

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

**MINUTES**

June 26, 2014

The Board of Education and the Board of Career and Technical Education met at the James Monroe State Office Building, Jefferson Conference Room, 22<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Richmond, with the following members present:

Mr. Christian N. Braunlich, President	Mr. James H. Dillard
Mrs. Winsome E. Sears, Vice President	Mrs. Darla Edwards
Mrs. Diane T. Atkinson	Mr. Andrew Ko
Dr. Oktay Baysal	Mrs. Joan E. Wodiska
Dr. Billy K. Cannaday, Jr.	
	Dr. Steven R. Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction

Mr. Braunlich called the meeting to order at 9 a.m.

***MOMENT OF SILENCE/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE***

Mr. Braunlich asked for a moment of silence and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

***APPROVAL OF MINUTES***

Mrs. Atkinson made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 22, 2014, meeting of the Board. The motion was seconded by Dr. Baysal and carried unanimously. Copies of the minutes had been distributed in advance of the meeting.

***RESOLUTIONS/RECOGNITION***

A Resolution of Recognition was presented to the Recipient of the 2013 Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award: Elizabeth Galinis, science teacher, Hayfield Secondary School, Fairfax County Public Schools.

***PUBLIC COMMENT***

The following persons spoke during public comment:

- Dr. Steven King, representing Virginia Coalition of Fine Arts Education, spoke on scheduling of remediation and its impact on Fine Arts instruction
- Jim Batterson, spoke on creation of an engineering endorsement for high school engineering teachers

- Celeste Busby, representing Advocates for Quality Education (AQE) and Eye on Virginia Education (EVE), spoke on mathematics education
- Kris Allen, president, Virginia Education Coalition (VEC), spoke on mathematics education
- Dorothy Bruno, representing Advocates for Quality Education, spoke on mathematics education
- Brenda Levy, spoke on mathematics education
- Rebecca Erickson, representing Advocates for Quality Education, spoke on mathematics education
- Nancy Godfrey, parent and education activist, spoke on mathematics education
- John Pettengill, representing Advocates for Quality Education, spoke on mathematics education
- Ann McLean, president, Board of Directors, Hunter Country Day School, spoke on mathematics education
- Dr. Paula Kionowski, representing the Virginia Mathematics and Science Coalition, spoke on alternative assessments for *Science Standards of Learning*
- Chris Dovi, spoke on implementing House Bill 1054 related to Computer Science

Mr. Braunlich noted that although the Board does not usually respond to public comments, he would meet with constituents to discuss the concerns raised related to mathematics education.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Mrs. Atkinson made a motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Edwards and carried unanimously.

### **Final Review of Proposal to Establish the Bedford County Public Schools Governor's Health Sciences Academy**

With the Board's approval of the consent agenda, the Board approved the proposal to establish the Bedford County Public Schools Governor's Health Sciences Academy.

On behalf of the Board, Mr. Braunlich presented the Bedford County Public Schools Governor's Health Sciences Academy with a Certificate of Recognition and a banner to display at the academy. Representing Bedford County Public Schools was Dr. Fred Conner, supervisor for Career and Technical Education and Mrs. Barbara Rezzonico, executive administrator for the Science and Technology Center.

## ***ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS***

### ***Final Review of Corrective Action Plan Required by the Division-Level Review for Franklin City Public Schools***

Dr. Kathleen Smith, director of school improvement, presented this item. Representatives from Franklin City included the following: Mrs. Edna King, chair of the school board, and Mrs. Nancy Godwin, school board member.

- The Standards of Quality (SOQ) require local school boards to maintain *Fully Accredited* schools and to take corrective actions for schools that are not *Fully Accredited*. Further, when the Virginia Board of Education (VBOE) has obtained evidence through the academic review that the failure of schools within a division to achieve full accreditation status is related to division-level failure to implement the SOQ, the VBOE may require a division-level academic review.
- All three schools in Franklin City Public Schools have been *Accredited with Warning* for two consecutive years, and have federal sanctions due to not meeting the federal annual measurable objectives (AMOs). The school academic review process conducted in the 2012-2013 school year revealed evidence that the failure of the schools within the division to achieve full accreditation status is related to division-level failure to implement the SOQ, consistent with Section 22.1.-253.13:3 of the SOQ.
- On October 24, 2013, the VBOE placed Franklin City Public Schools in division-level academic review status and authorized the Department of Education to begin the review process. The division-level review process was conducted December 1-5, 2013.
- On March 27, 2014, the VBOE approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Franklin City School Board and the VBOE. The MOU, subject to annual review and revisions by the Board of Education, will be in place until all Franklin City Public Schools are *Fully Accredited*.
- As required by the Standards of Quality, the Franklin City School Board and the central office staff must include four key priorities in the corrective action plan and implement certain essential actions related to the findings of the division-level review process to improve student achievement:
  1. Curricula Alignment
  2. Human Resource Management and Quality of Leadership, Teachers and Support
  3. Purpose and Direction
  4. Leadership and Governance
- The comprehensive nature of the essential actions and findings from the division-level review will require the local board to focus its work on a few immediate priorities while making plans to implement actions that are more systemic over a longer period of time with input from the community. In recognition of these findings, the MOU requires essential actions categorized by immediate priority or systemic action over a longer period of time.
- On April 24, 2014, the VBOE announced that it would conduct a public hearing in Franklin City Public Schools to obtain input from constituents in Franklin City on the proposed corrective action plan. The public hearing was held on May 14, 2014, at Joseph P. King Middle School, and a report on this public hearing was submitted to the VBOE on May 22, 2014.

- The corrective action plan includes all essential actions noted in the MOU and indicates whether the essential action requires immediate priority or systemic action over a longer period of time, as well as essential actions offered by the department and the VBOE at the April 24, 2014, and May 22, 2014, meetings.
- While it is imperative that the corrective action plan be approved with all due speed, it is also apparent from their comments at the public hearing that the citizens of Franklin City Public Schools want more input into the development of the plan. If approved, the corrective action plan will be in effect from June 26, 2014 to November 30, 2014. During this time, the new (or interim) superintendent and the Franklin City School Board will form a committee to amend the corrective action plan to include additional essential actions that address the comments from the public hearing held on May 14, 2014, by the VBOE, that include descriptive timelines and actions, simplified language, and transparent, measurable outcomes for each action:
  1. The committee will minimally include parents, students, residents, business members, faith-based community representatives, city officials, community college representatives, principals and teachers.
  2. The committee will meet to finalize the corrective action plan and present a final corrective action plan for approval by the Franklin City School Board by October 17, 2014.
  3. The corrective action plan must be submitted to the VBOE by November 7, 2014. The VBOE will receive the updated corrective action plan on first review on November 20, 2014, and for final review and approval in January 2015.
- The Board of Education's approval of the corrective action plan which includes needed actions as indicated in the division-level review for Franklin City Public Schools will ensure that the new Division Superintendent will be involved in the development of the plan. The corrective action plan provides clear direction to address the immediate and long-term essential actions needed to improve schools. By requesting that the new Division Superintendent amend the corrective action plan between June 26, 2014, and November 7, 2014, to address the comments from the public hearing held on May 14, 2014, the amended plan will have the necessary public input to ensure the improvement of schools.

The Board discussion included:

- Mr. Braunlich noted that this is a temporary correction action plan and after approval by the Board, Franklin City Public Schools' new superintendent should be involved in the development of the plan to address comments from the public hearing held on May 14, 2014. Mr. Braunlich asked for an update on Franklin City Public Schools. Mrs. King indicated that they have a new superintendent and at the last school board meeting SOL test scores were compared with scores from the previous year. Mrs. King said that Franklin City Public Schools is committed to following all guidelines and regulations and will work closely with the Chief Academic Officer to continue the progress they are making.
- Mrs. Sears asked if deadlines in the areas of curricula alignment and formal observation reports had been completed. Dr. Smith said most of the items in the first section of the corrective action plan were a result of the essential actions found in the academic review of schools and Franklin City Public Schools had until May to implement all of those actions. Dr. Smith said that the curricula had issues in the area of English because the writing component was not aligned to the new standards and that teachers were notified and received staff development on the changes. Dr. Smith said formal observation reporting has not been done to the extent that they should have and Franklin City Public Schools will begin a series of professional

development with the Chief Academic Officer beginning in August and continuing throughout the school year on what kind of feedback needs to be on teacher observation forms.

- Mrs. Sears asked if the deadline of having 100 percent of Franklin City Public Schools administrative employees having current Virginia licenses with appropriate endorsements for their particular job assignments had been met. Mrs. King said that 99 percent of teachers have licenses with appropriate endorsements in their areas. Dr. Smith said Franklin City Public Schools is in the process of changing staff and Dr. Lanham and the Chief Academic Officer will work together to ensure that Franklin City Public Schools will have fully endorsed and licensed teachers in the classrooms.
- Mrs. Atkinson said she would prefer monthly reporting instead of quarterly reporting on hard-to-staff positions. Dr. Smith said they will suggest that they meet with the new superintendent.
- Dr. Cannaday clarified that information reported to the local school board will be reported to the state board via Dr. Smith to keep members informed on the status of essential actions that are of immediate priority.
- Mrs. Sears asked if the essential action to consider aligning the speech pathologist and school psychologist to higher pay scales competitive with surrounding localities deadline had been completed. Mrs. King said this involved personnel and did not want to discuss it in public but said some adjustments were made. Dr. Smith said Dr. Lanham will look at this policy and report to the Board.
- Mrs. Sears also asked if the essential action to review the policy to ensure the potential for securing the best qualified candidates in hard-to-staff positions and consider whether this is the most effective use of Title II funding deadline was completed. Mrs. King indicated that it had been completed. Dr. Smith said that Dr. Lanham will also look at this policy and report to the Board.
- Mrs. Sears asked if professional development for the local school board and an outline of what constitutes professional development for the school board has been started. Mrs. King said they were waiting for the Governor's Conference and the training for new school board members and new superintendent. Mrs. King said VSBA will also be asked to provide training on the Standards of Quality.
- Mrs. Sears asked representatives of the Franklin City School Board if there were deadlines in the corrective action plan that caused them concerns of not being able to meet. Mrs. Godwin noted that one of her concerns was not being able to televise local board meetings because of the budget. Mrs. Godwin said the corrective action plan involves a lot of work but school board members are willing to work together to get it done. Mrs. Sears asked how much access the Chief Academic Officer has in regards to everything that is happening with Franklin City Public Schools. Dr. Smith said the Chief Academic Officer is there every other week and they are putting a specific person in place to work with the principals at S. P. Morton Elementary School and J. P. King Jr. Middle School. Mrs. Smith said that Dr. Lanham will also work with the principals and Chief Academic Officer as a team.
- Mrs. Sears asked if the Chief Academic Officer is a part of the local school board meetings and if she attended closed sessions as well. Mrs. King said she is included

in all local school board meetings but does not attend all of the closed sessions.

- Mrs. Atkinson asked that the Chief Academic Office be included in closed sessions whenever personnel issues are addressed. Mrs. King said the school board has not hired any new instructional personnel without recommendation and approval from Dr. Lanham.
- Mr. Braunlich noted a principal was hired without Dr. Lanham's approval which is not acceptable to the Board. Mr. Braunlich said the Chief Academic Officer needs to be involved in closed sessions when instructional personnel issues are addressed. Dr. Smith also noted that any personnel decisions made by the school board should involve Dr. Lanham to be sure the new hires are the best qualified candidates. Dr. Smith said Dr. Lanham also needs to be involved when teachers currently teaching are moved to other positions to be sure they are endorsed in that area.
- Dr. Cannaday asked that a written plan or schedule is given to the new superintendent listing monthly expectations that should be reported to the school board. Dr. Cannaday said that staff could provide guidance with the list of expectations for the new superintendent.
- Mrs. Edwards asked if the school board has a plan to engage a diverse group of stakeholders in the community. Mrs. King said the new superintendent already has a plan to engage people in the community and she thinks he will be successful. Mrs. Edwards suggested an additional goal of outreaching more effectively to the community of parents and engaging them as equal partners in their children's education and link family engagement with learning. Mrs. Edwards suggested [www.volunteerspot.org](http://www.volunteerspot.org) which is a free resource for schools looking for ways to mobilize their volunteer program within the school community.
- Mrs. Sears asked Mrs. King who is responsible for the corrective action plan and its objectives being met. Mrs. King responded that persons designated within the plan have responsibility and the school board has to ensure that policies and procedures are in place that will lead to accountability so the reporting will be through the superintendent and school board. Mrs. King said she thinks it should be a collaborative process when it comes to responsibility.
- Mrs. Sears said the MOU has been signed and already there have been violations and asked who consults the MOU to ensure that the agreement is being upheld. Mrs. King said the school board chair is responsible for seeing that everyone is held accountable and the superintendent should consult with staff to ensure deadlines are met. Mrs. Sears asked who made the decision to hire the principal. Mrs. King said the school board acted on a recommendation from the superintendent. Mrs. Sears asked if anyone was checking behind the superintendent.
- Mrs. Sears asked what qualifications the new superintendent has in turning around a school system. Mrs. King said the new superintendent has experience in turning around schools in Sussex County, Richmond City, and North Carolina. Mrs. King noted that the new superintendent will start on July 1, 2014 and he is aware of the MOU and the corrective action plan.
- Mr. Ko said the most critical part of turnaround situations is the leadership. Mr. Ko said the new superintendent should be qualified and ready to take on tough tasks. Mr. Ko said the school board's responsibility is to support the new superintendent.

Mr. Ko said he would like to meet with the new superintendent when it is appropriate.

- Mrs. Atkinson said the MOU is a legal document signed by the school board chair. Mrs. Atkinson said even though the superintendent assists the school board it is ultimately the school board's responsibility. Mrs. Atkinson said as the school board moves forward she suggests, especially in the personnel component, to ask the superintendent 'are we acting in a manner that is consistent with the MOU' and not make the assumption that those things have occurred.
- Mrs. Wodiska said she is disappointed with some of the information provided by Franklin City Public Schools. Mrs. Wodiska said strong school board leadership is the backbone for accountability in the community working together with the superintendent. Mrs. Wodiska said the children in the community are counting on the school board to do their job. Mrs. Wodiska asked what needs to be accomplished in Franklin in the next thirty days. Mrs. King responded that the school board has not made a list because they thought the corrective action plan had not been adopted. Dr. Smith said it was her assumption the corrective action plan was approved by the school board. Mrs. King responded that she thought that when the public hearing was held that meant the corrective action plan was not approved.
- Mrs. Sears said at that time the Chief Academic Officer was on site and the process had already begun to fulfill certain timelines in the corrective action plan.
- Mr. Braunlich asked again if the corrective action plan had been adopted by Franklin City School Board. Both Mrs. King and Mrs. Godwin said the new changes in the corrective action plan have not been adopted.
- Dr. Smith suggested the new superintendent receive a list of the essential actions with deadlines. Dr. Smith said the corrective action plan was adopted and the changes made are in italics. Dr. Smith said the Chief Academic Officer worked with staff at Franklin City Public Schools to make the changes in the corrective action plan and there is nothing in the plan that staff at Franklin City Public Schools are not aware of. Dr. Smith said in moving forward the school board needs a clear blueprint of what is due. Dr. Smith said she will prepare the list and share it with the new superintendent when they meet with him in July.
- Dr. Cannaday said this will help the local school board be accountable. Dr. Cannaday said the new superintendent should come prepared to work with the local school board on preparing the strategies to implement the essential actions.
- Mrs. Wodiska said the positions available for principals listed basic qualifications and asked what other qualifications the school board is looking for when hiring principals.
- Mrs. Sears said there does not seem to be any urgency with the Franklin City School Board. Mrs. Sears said the school board should have known that there are timelines and decisions that have to be made. Mrs. Sears said things need to change quickly before the beginning of the school year. Mrs. Sears said they will not lose another year of the children's education in Franklin City Public Schools.
- Mr. Braunlich said the most important issue is the personnel in the classroom. The Board detected early issues with personnel in Franklin City and recent actions have suggested that the human resources is still not what it needs to be. Mr. Braunlich

said the MOU is not about giving reports and filling out details. It is to ensure that a system is doing what effectively works.

- Dr. Staples said part of the problem is a disconnect between the expectations of what the state board wants from the school board, as when a school receives an MOU it is usually not invited. Dr. Staples said the state board would like the school board to use the MOU in order to create local expectations that align with what the state board is talking about. Dr. Staples said the frustration of board members is that they are not hearing from the local school board how the changes will happen. Dr. Staples said the state board is asking the local school board to look at the corrective action plan and Memorandum of Understanding and talk about how the local school board sees those things as important and direct action to get to those things. Dr. Staples said when they meet with the new superintendent those are some of the things he will ask him to help the school board explore.

Mrs. Wodiska made a motion to approve the corrective action plan for Franklin City Public Schools for the period of June 26, 2014 to November 30, 2014, and requested the Franklin City School Board to modify the corrective action plan and present it to the Board of Education for first review on November 20, 2014, after consultation with the new superintendent. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ko and carried unanimously.

**Final Review of Amendments to the Regulations Governing Nutritional Guidelines for Competitive Foods Available for Sale in the Public Schools (Re-Proposed Stage)**

Mrs. Catherine Digilio-Grimes, director for school nutrition programs, presented this item. Mrs. Digilio-Grimes presentation included the following:

- Section 22.1-207.4, *Code of Virginia*, requires the Board of Education to promulgate regulations setting nutritional guidelines for all competitive foods sold to students during regular school hours, and further requires the guidelines to be periodically reviewed by the Board to ensure they remain current, science-based, and consistent with any changes to the federal laws or regulations on competitive foods.
- The Department worked with the required stakeholders to develop the proposed stage regulations, reviewed all public comment received, and in response revised the proposed regulations to align with the new federal regulations governing competitive foods. This alignment will eliminate the possibility of conflicts between the two sets of state and federal regulations.

The Board discussion included:

- Mr. Braunlich wanted to make clear that these are not regulations for in school meals and asked Mrs. Digilio-Grimes to confirm. Mrs. Digilio-Grimes said these regulations apply to the nutritional content of any food excluding beverages, sold to students on the school campus during the school day that are not part of the reimbursable meals served through the school lunch, breakfast or afterschool snack programs. Mrs. Digilio-Grimes said the regulations include foods sold to students in vending machines, as a la carte items in the school cafeteria, at snack bars, stores operated by the school, a student association, or other school-sponsored organization, and at school activities such as fundraisers, and foods available for

sale to students by culinary or other educational programs. Mrs. Digilio-Grimes said the school day is the period from the midnight before, to thirty minutes after the end of the official school day.

- Mrs. Wodiska asked Mrs. Digilio-Grimes to describe the technical assistance that will be provided to school divisions to meet the new standards. Mrs. Digilio-Grimes said training was held for school nutrition directors and they in turn will train their individual school boards and personnel. Mrs. Digilio-Grimes said staff is in the process of developing guidance documents which will provide information for alternative fundraising activities and providing webinars to help school divisions make decisions on what they will be offering for sale.
- Mrs. Wodiska asked what additional outreach will be provided, particularly with the PTA. Mrs. Digilio-Grimes said they will work with the PTA in any way possible and she will contact them to get on the agenda for their state conference. Mrs. Digilio-Grimes said they are currently on the agenda to address the competitive food regulations at the Virginia Association of School Business Officials meeting and a Superintendent's Memorandum was sent to school divisions about the regulations. Mrs. Digilio-Grimes said staff hopes to reach out to all school divisions before the new regulations are in effect.
- Dr. Staples said the majority of questions staff receives about the guidelines are more about the 'why' than the 'what'. Dr. Staples said people understand the guidelines and recognize that this is something they are required to do by the federal government. Staff will continue to provide assistance and guidance as schools implement the requirements.
- Mr. Braunlich said it is important to make clear that these are not the Board's guidelines but guidelines the Board is creating to align with the federal guidelines so school divisions will not have two sets of guidelines. Mr. Braunlich asked Mrs. Digilio-Grimes to create a document for the public.

Mrs. Wodiska made a motion to approve the re-proposed *Regulations Governing Nutritional Guidelines for Competitive Foods Sold in the Public Schools*. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ko and carried unanimously.

**Final Review of Recommendation of the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure (ABTEL) to Accredite the Teacher Education Program at Lynchburg College through a Process Approved by the Board of Education**

Mrs. Patty Pitts, assistant superintendent for teacher education and licensure, presented this item. Representatives from Lynchburg College included: Dr. Jan Stennette, dean, school of education and human development and Dr. Julius Sigler, vice president and dean for academic affairs. Mrs. Pitt's presentation included the following:

- At the Board of Education meeting on May 22, 2014, Dr. Jan Stennette, Dean of the School of Education and Human Development, was available to respond to questions regarding the *Professional Education Program Review Team Report of Findings* and *Lynchburg College's Response to the Professional Education Program Review Team Report of Findings*. During the discussion, Board members requested Lynchburg College to submit a plan outlining how the College will address the weaknesses cited in the

on-site review team's report. Board members also agreed that the attendance of Lynchburg College's president or provost at the June 26, 2014, meeting would be beneficial. In response to the Board of Education's request, Dr. Kenneth R. Garren, President, Lynchburg College, sent a letter to the Board which addressed the *Plans and Time Frame for Addressing Weaknesses Identified in the October 2013 Visiting Team's Report of Findings*.

- The on-site review team recommended that the professional education program at Lynchburg College be "accredited with stipulations," and the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure supported the recommendation. "Accredited with stipulations" means that the professional education program has met the standards minimally but significant weaknesses have been identified. Within a two-year period, the professional education program must meet the standards. The President of Lynchburg College and the Dean of the School of Education and Human Development have provided a plan and timeline to correct the weaknesses. If the professional education program's accreditation is denied, the program could not admit new students, and the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) would be notified of the action. The best incentive to bring improvement to the program is the designation of "accredited with stipulations."

The Board discussion included:

- Mrs. Edwards said she found the time frame to be helpful and was encouraged by the number of things already completed by Lynchburg College and with the plan to address standards needing improvement.
- Dr. Baysal said that new graduates from the school of education are not enough to meet the demand for teachers in the Commonwealth and therefore teachers are being imported from other states. Dr. Baysal asked about language on Lynchburg College's Web site noting that it was 'approved by the Board of Education'. Mrs. Pitts answered that Lynchburg College has had approved programs for many years and every seven years it is required that they come before the Board for approval because they have chosen the Board of Education process to request accreditation of their professional education program. Dr. Baysal asked if 'approved' and 'accredited' are two different things. Mrs. Pitts said the professional education program is accredited and individual programs such as mathematics, elementary education, and social studies are approved by the Board of Education biennially. Mrs. Pitts said the individual programs such as administration supervision or guidance and counseling are endorsement programs and they are approved but the unit, the school of education, is accredited.
- Mr. Braunlich said the Board is grateful for the letter from Dr. Garren, president of Lynchburg College, which contained a strong set of plans and time frame for addressing weaknesses and demonstrates that Lynchburg College recognizes the task that is ahead.

Dr. Baysal made a motion to approve the Advisory Board on Teacher Education and Licensure's recommendation that the professional education program at Lynchburg College be "accredited with stipulations." The professional education program has met the standards minimally, but significant weaknesses have been identified. This approval is contingent on the quarterly status report, the first due by September 30, 2014, updating the progress of correcting the weaknesses. This report must be submitted to the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Within a two-year period, the professional education program must meet all standards. The

motion was seconded by Mrs. Edwards and carried unanimously.

**Final Review of Guidelines and a Model Waiver Form for High School to Work Partnerships**

Mrs. Anne Wescott, assistant superintendent for policy and communications, presented this item. Mrs. Westcott's presentation included the following:

- Based on discussion by the Board of Education at the May 22 meeting, language is proposed to be added to the model waiver form to say:

“NOTICE: The High School to Work Partnerships Model Liability Waiver has been developed as required by § 22.1-227.1 of the *Code of Virginia* and Chapter 697, 2013 Acts of Assembly. The Supreme Court of Virginia has held that releases for future acts of negligence, such as the Model Liability Waiver contained below, are not enforceable and “[are] prohibited by public policy and thus [are] void.” *Hiatt v. Lake Barcroft Community Assn.*”

The Virginia Board of Education does not recommend the use of this waiver.

However, if businesses and parents participating in High School to Work Partnerships want to use a waiver, they should contact legal counsel to determine whether the waiver affords any legal protection against the recovery of damages for future acts of negligence that result in student injury.”

The Board discussion included:

- Mr. Braunlich recognized Mrs. Wescott on her retirement and thanked her for her years of service and gave other Board members the opportunity to express their appreciation.

Mr. Dillard made a motion to approve the High School to Work Partnerships Guidelines and approve the High School to Work Partnerships Model Liability Waiver as amended with the disclaimer. The motion was seconded by Dr. Cannaday and passed with eight “yes” votes. Mrs. Sears voted “no”.

**Report of the Adult Education and Literacy Advisory Committee to the Virginia Board of Education on the 2014 General Educational Development (GED) Testing Program**

Dr. Susan Clair, director of adult education and literacy, and Dr. Thomas Brewster, chair, Virginia Adult Education and Literacy Advisory Committee, presented this item. Their presentation included the following:

- In March 2013, the Superintendent of Public Instruction approved the state's adoption of the 2014 GED<sup>®</sup> test as the state approved alternative high school credential. The GED<sup>®</sup> test was selected because it is widely accepted and recognized by postsecondary education and employers.
- On January 2, 2014, the GED<sup>®</sup> Testing Service (GEDTS) made significant changes to the GED<sup>®</sup> test in terms of both content and delivery. The 2014 GED<sup>®</sup> test changed from paper-based testing to a test delivered on computer at authorized Pearson VUE Testing Centers. The 2014 GED<sup>®</sup> test has four subject areas instead of the five subject areas on the previous test. These subject areas are: Reasoning Through Language Arts, Mathematical Reasoning, Science, and Social Studies.

- The 2014 test ensures expanded opportunities for adult students to learn the content and skills necessary for success in the workplace and postsecondary education. The 2014 GED<sup>®</sup> test also meets higher standards for high school completion as set by the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education, the Common Core State Standards, and standards used by Texas, Virginia, and other states.
- On July 1, 2014, HB 1007 (Byron) changes all references in the *Code of Virginia* from “General Educational Development (GED<sup>®</sup>)” to “high school equivalency examinations approved by the Board of Education.”
- The Office of Adult Education and Literacy (OAEL) administer three funding streams that support the 2014 GED<sup>®</sup> program: Race to GED, Individual Student Alternative Education Plan (ISAEP) program, and General Adult Education (GAE) grant funds.
- State Race to GED funds are used for (1) outreach to adult learners, (2) instruction to prepare for the GED<sup>®</sup> test, (3) GED<sup>®</sup> testing, and (4) preparation for computer-based GED<sup>®</sup> testing.
- The ISAEP grant funds \$2,247,581 of approved ISAEP programs across the state. This amount of \$2,247,581 has not changed since the program’s inception in 1999. The substantive increase in the 2014 GED<sup>®</sup> test cost to \$120, as well as the individual cost of \$6 for each of the four GED Ready<sup>™</sup> subject tests, is funded by school division ISAEP program funding.
- The General Adult Education (GAE) grant funds \$1,051,800 in support of Virginia adult education programs. These funds are used to support adult secondary school classes for credit, GED<sup>®</sup> instructional preparation classes, civics education classes, and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. As with the ISAEP program, the substantive increase in the cost of the 2014 GED<sup>®</sup> test and the GED Ready<sup>™</sup> test will be borne by either the individual adult education tester or the GAE supported adult education program.

#### MyGED<sup>™</sup>

MyGED<sup>™</sup> is the start-to-finish Web portal for GED<sup>®</sup> test takers and those instructors who work with them. The MyGED<sup>™</sup> portal is a personalized online program that guides test takers through the entire testing process, including registering and scheduling to take the test, taking the GED Ready<sup>™</sup> practice test, and receiving score reports.

#### GED Ready<sup>™</sup>

The GED Ready<sup>™</sup> test is the official GED<sup>®</sup> practice test and provides a testing experience similar to the actual GED<sup>®</sup> test. The GED Ready<sup>™</sup> score report evaluates a student’s readiness (or lack of readiness) for the actual test.

#### The Cost of the 2014 GED<sup>®</sup> Program

The cost to take the complete GED<sup>®</sup> test prior to 2014 was \$58. The cost to take the 2014 GED<sup>®</sup> test is \$30 per subject. There are four sections of the official test for a total of \$120 to take the full battery. This reflects a 48% increase to take the 2014 test. Individuals who do not pass all subject areas of the test may retest at a reduced rate of \$10 per subject area test for two test repetitions. The cost to take the GED Ready<sup>™</sup> practice test is \$6 per subject area. There are four subjects to the practice test for a total of \$24.

#### Pearson VUE Testing Centers

As of June 2014, there are 140 Pearson VUE Testing Centers capable of administering the 2014 GED<sup>®</sup> test. This number will vary based on testing demand within the state. Some Pearson VUE Testing Centers in the state do not administer the GED<sup>®</sup> test.

#### GED<sup>®</sup> Options, the Individual Student Alternative Education Plan (ISAEP) program, and Release from Compulsory Attendance

The GED<sup>®</sup> Options program is the nationwide GEDTS program that allows eligible students 16 or 17 years of age enrolled in a K-12 school division and those individuals exempted from compulsory attendance to take the GED<sup>®</sup>

test. Virginia's Options program, the ISAEP program, serves this group of learners. All ISAEP students must receive approval from the Office of Adult Education and Literacy (OAEL) prior to the scheduling of their GED<sup>®</sup> testing. This approval requires testing eligibility and program requirement attainment verification by the school division superintendent or his or her designee. As of July 1, 2014, all ISAEP programs will be required to administer the GED Ready<sup>™</sup> practice test or a GEDTS vendor approved practice test to determine eligibility for enrollment in the ISAEP program and for final GED<sup>®</sup> testing. Students under the age of 18 who have been released from compulsory attendance by the court system or by the school division must provide documentation of release to OAEL. OAEL will then authorize the eligible student to take the GED<sup>®</sup> test.

#### Transitional Waiver Program (TWP)

There are 25 jails and detention centers that are under a transitional waiver contract. Each of these sites will become computer-based testing sites at different times throughout 2014, with all of the sites being active computer sites by January 1, 2015.

#### Transition from OAEL Credentialing to GED Credentialing<sup>™</sup>

As part of the 2014 GED<sup>®</sup> Program, the GEDTS offered states the option of providing a Web-based credentialing service called GED Credentialing<sup>™</sup>. OAEL transitioned to the GED Credentialing<sup>™</sup> service on January 2, 2014. GED<sup>®</sup> test takers who need a copy of their GED<sup>®</sup> transcript or GED<sup>®</sup> certificate can create an account and order either an electronic or paper copy of their credentials. To date in Virginia, 2,512 e-transcripts, 819 e-certificates, 835 paper transcripts, and 777 official paper copies of the GED<sup>®</sup> certificate have been processed by the GED Credentialing<sup>™</sup> service.

#### Virginia GED<sup>®</sup> Testers to Date

Between January 1 and June 1, 2014, 1,671 Virginia testers have taken one or more of the 2014 GED<sup>®</sup> subject area tests. Of these individuals, 937 have completed the entire battery of tests and 500 have passed the complete battery of the GED<sup>®</sup> test. The Virginia pass average is 53 percent while the national pass average is 48 percent.

Between January 1 and June 1, 2013, 9,728 individuals in Virginia took the entire GED<sup>®</sup> test, of which, 6,988 passed the complete battery, reflecting a pass rate of 71%. Comparison of this year's data to last year's data shows that present GED<sup>®</sup> test completers are 9% of the number completed last year and that present GED<sup>®</sup> passers are 7% of the number passing last year. The impact of these reduced numbers and expanded cost is of yet indeterminate due to the lack of quantifiable data and reportable field data.

#### Alternative High School Equivalency Exams

Two High School Equivalency assessment options are currently available in addition to the GED<sup>®</sup> test - the *High School Equivalency Test* (HiSET<sup>®</sup>), from the Educational Testing Service, and CTB/McGraw Hill's *Test Assessing Secondary Completion<sup>™</sup>* (TASC). According to a recent report compiled by the National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium, 40 states have selected the 2014 GED<sup>®</sup> computer-based test as their approved alternative high school assessment, three states selected all three high school equivalency tests, seven states selected only the HiSET, and three states selected only the TASC. OAEL is researching these other high school equivalency options.

#### Impact on Fiscal and Human Resources

The cost for the GED Ready<sup>™</sup> practice test is \$24 for all four subject area tests, or \$6 per individual subject area test. The cost to take the full battery is \$120, or \$30 per subject. Many programs are using 2013-14 Race to GED<sup>®</sup> funds to purchase vouchers to help offset the cost to test takers when they take the practice test and/or the official GED<sup>®</sup> test. Some regional adult education programs are offering to pay for the full cost or partial cost of the test if test takers meet certain program incentive requirements.

The Board discussion included:

- Mrs. Atkinson asked if people are experiencing difficulties in transferring from the paper test to the computer-based test and what steps have been taken to assist these people. Dr. Clair said older adults are experiencing more difficulty with the

computer-based test than the younger population. Dr. Clair said the adult education programs are prepared to teach the older adults who need technology skills to take the test.

- Mr. Dillard asked if Virginia recognized the other alternative tests that are available nationwide. Dr. Clair said Virginia currently recognizes only the GED test.
- Mr. Dillard asked if other alternative tests available nationwide were paper or computer-based. Dr. Clair said both of the options have paper and computer-based tests. Mr. Dillard asked if Virginia should consider adopting some other alternatives to make it easier for adults. Dr. Clair said staff is researching other options but they do not have enough information at the moment to make a good recommendation about another test.
- Dr. Staples said staff is not prepared to recommend other tests because they have not completed research on the availability and rigor of other tests. Dr. Staples said the GED is recognized nationwide. Dr. Staples said the Board will receive recommendations for other tests but it may not be in July.
- Dr. Cannaday was concerned about the increase in cost for the test and asked if there has been conversation about a regional compact with other states. Dr. Clair said they have not had that conversation with other states. Dr. Clair said the cost of the test was set by GED Testing Service without input from states. Dr. Cannaday said the cost will continue to go up and he hoped that part of the conversation would be recommendations to legislators that they began to exert pressure about the increase in cost.
- Mr. Braunlich asked if the increase of cost is paid by the test taker. Dr. Clair said they are but in some cases the state funded adult education literacy programs receive Race to GED state funds and they are able to offset the cost of the GED test. Dr. Clair said the GED adult education literacy program requires enrollment in GED classes in preparation for the GED test, and receive a certain score on the practice test to receive a voucher to take the GED test.
- Mr. Braunlich noted that between January 1 and June 1, 2014, 1,671 Virginia testers have taken one or more of the 2014 GED subject area tests and that 937 have completed the entire battery of tests and 500 have passed the complete battery of the GED test. Mr. Braunlich asked if employers are aware of the cost increase of the GED and if they have offered scholarships to their employees upon completion of the GED.
- Mrs. Atkinson asked if the vouchers used to offset the cost is state funded. Dr. Clair said it was Race to GED state funds that are distributed to adult education and literacy programs in which they have to apply to receive funding. Dr. Clair said the funding is used for GED testing preparation instruction and to offset the cost of the test in some cases. Mrs. Atkinson asked if these funds are also used to offset the cost of the GED Ready practice test. Mrs. Clair answered that they were.

The Board accepted the report of the Adult Education and Literacy Advisory Committee.

**Report from the Assessment and Accountability Roundtable on Guidelines for Local Assessments in Response to House Bill 930/Senate Bill 306**

Mrs. Melissa Luchau, director for board relations, presented this item. Mrs. Luchau's presentation included the following:

- House Bill 930 and Senate Bill 306 passed the 2014 General Assembly and signed by the Governor amended § 22.1-253.13:3 of the *Code of Virginia*. The legislation provides that:

"Each school board shall annually certify that it has provided instruction and administered an alternative assessment, consistent with Board guidelines, to students in grades three through eight in each Standards of Learning subject area in which a Standards of Learning assessment was not administered during the school year. Such guidelines shall (1) incorporate options for age-appropriate, authentic performance assessments and portfolios with rubrics and other methodologies designed to ensure that students are making adequate academic progress in the subject area and that the Standards of Learning content is being taught; (2) permit and encourage integrated assessments that include multiple subject areas; and (3) emphasize collaboration between teachers to administer and substantiate the assessments and the professional development of teachers to enable them to make the best use of alternative assessments."

The Assessment and Accountability Roundtable consists of representatives from the following organizations:

Virginia Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development  
Virginia Association of Elementary School Principals  
Virginia Association of School Superintendents  
Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals  
Virginia Education Association  
Virginia Parent-Teacher Association  
Virginia School Boards Association

At the Board of Education meeting on May 21, 2014, some questions were presented to the Board for consideration as it develops guidelines for local assessments. The questions included:

1. How will school divisions certify that local assessments measure the Standards of Learning (SOL)?
2. Must the local assessments include all SOL for that subject?
3. Must local assessments include "authentic performance assessments" or may they include primarily multiple-choice or technology-enhanced items?
4. What is the definition of "authentic performance assessments"?
5. Must the same assessment be used across a division or may decisions about assessments be made at the school level?
6. Must local assessments provide a summative measure of student achievement or will interim assessments administered throughout the year be sufficient?
7. Will the guidelines allow for group work? If so, will there be guidance as to how the contribution of individual students will be captured?
8. If performance tasks are used, will students be permitted to attempt the same task again if they are unsuccessful on the first attempt? Will it be permissible to use the same tasks from year to year or will it be necessary to develop new tasks?
9. If integrated assessments are used, will the requirements be different?
10. What professional development must be provided to teachers?
11. What support will be provided to small school divisions?
12. How will "adequate academic progress" be defined?
13. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that alternate assessments be provided for students who are unable to participate in the regular division assessment. How will school divisions ensure that this requirement is addressed?

The Assessment and Accountability Roundtable's response to Department of Education questions related to interpretation of House Bill 930 and Senate Bill 306 are as follows:

### Introduction

The Assessment and Accountability Roundtable welcomes the opportunity to provide responses to the questions posed in Dr. Loving-Ryder's May 2014 presentation. The Roundtable speaks on behalf of educators and parents from across the Commonwealth, and these responses represent the consensus positions of our group.

We are not only keenly interested in policy related to Virginia's assessment and accountability system, but we hope to be a valued resource to the Board and Department of Education as these policies are shaped and implemented. We represent practitioners who not only work with students and teachers every day, but who also understand the research and literature related to assessment of student learning.

Our responses to Dr. Loving-Ryder's questions are based on two core principles that we see as foundational to House Bill 930(SB306). The first is increased local flexibility. Passion for the content, student engagement, and higher-level thinking can neither be legislated nor required by policy. These occur when teachers think and innovate within their daily work. By providing for authentic and performance assessment options, HB930/SB306 opens the door for this innovation to be supported and encouraged. In order to align policy with this principle, we believe that the Board's guidelines should delegate as much control over assessment practices as possible to school divisions.

The second principle is attention to quality and alignment. While local flexibility is essential, we must not give up the consistency and coherence provided by the SOL. At the end of the last century, the implementation of the Standards in all classrooms was an important step forward for the Commonwealth's schools. The assurance that students will receive instruction on a "guaranteed and viable curriculum" (Marzano, 2000) is well known to positively impact student learning. This is an area in which we must not take a step backward. However, we assert that it is indeed possible to increase local flexibility while maintaining alignment of instruction and assessments to the Standards.

We have reviewed the language of House Bill 930/SB306. Our interpretation of some of its key passages follows:

1. Guidelines shall "*incorporate options for age-appropriate, authentic performance assessments and portfolios with rubrics and other methodologies....*"  
We interpret this to mean that authentic assessment, portfolios, and other methodologies are intended to be options that school divisions may choose as ways to assess student learning of SOL content and skills.
2. Guidelines shall incorporate "*...methodologies designed to ensure that students are making adequate academic progress in the subject area and that the Standards of Learning content is being taught*".  
We interpret this to mean that as alternate forms of assessment are designed, tested, administered, and interpreted; attention must be given to quality and alignment. Alignment refers to the degree to which the assessment is a valid measure of the learning goals in the SOL. Quality includes not only this validity but also the reliability with which the students' work can be evaluated.
3. Guidelines should "*permit and encourage integrated assessments that include multiple subject areas.*"  
We interpret this to mean that a single assessment that incorporates SOL from multiple subject areas can serve as evidence of achievement across those subject areas.
4. Guidelines should "*substantiate the assessments and the professional development of teachers to enable them to make the best use of alternative assessments.*"  
We interpret this to mean that while local flexibility is important, so is a planned set of opportunities whereby teachers may learn about assessment design, participate in calibration and critique of existing assessment tasks, and improve the quality and alignment of alternative assessments for their classrooms.

### Response to Questions

1. **How will school divisions certify that local assessments measure the SOL?**

The *Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Superintendents* (adopted by the Virginia Board of Education, January 2000) specify that it is each Division Superintendent's responsibility to "monitor coordination of instructional programs with state and local standards." The instructional program in each school division includes the choice, implementation and administration of assessments, whether they are alternative forms or SOL-type tests. Therefore, we assert that a certification from each Superintendent stating that, in areas where SOL tests have been eliminated, student learning is being assessed using aligned, quality assessment tools is sufficient.

While some have opined that requiring only a certification could lead to an inclination for some school divisions to misrepresent actual practice, we reject that assumption. Superintendents currently certify the validity of a number of reports and results and are accountable not only to the state but also to local school boards and parents. The existing accountability system that includes excessive reporting and relies on punitive measures to drive improvement has possibly fostered this supposition. As Virginia's accountability system evolves, we hope it will move further from a "test-and-punish" model towards a "support-and-improve" one. The Board's formulation of these initial guidelines provides an opportunity to take a step in that direction.

Should the Board determine that more detailed reporting than we have recommended is essential, the Roundtable may be able to assist by recommending reporting models that are minimally cumbersome yet meet the Board's expectation. One option worth exploring is a process for reviewing and auditing a sample of assessments and student products.

**2. Must the local assessments include all SOL for that subject?**

When assessment is conducted by taking a "snapshot" of student learning at one selected time, as with a traditional high-stakes SOL test, it is necessary to sample the content. Some existing SOL tests require excessive time for some students to complete, and still the questions cannot cover all of the skills and content taught during the year. Allowing the certification of multiple classroom assessments given at various times during the year makes it possible to require that those assessments include a significant proportion and perhaps all of the SOL for that subject.

**3. Must local assessments include "authentic performance assessments" or may they include primarily multiple-choice or technology-enhanced items?**

Our interpretation of House Bill 930/SB306 is that the choice of assessment types, including whether to use authentic performance assessments, multiple-choice or other selected response formats, or technology-enhanced items, is an option at the local level.

**4. What is the definition of "authentic performance assessments"?**

A performance assessment is a type of assessment in which students demonstrate the use of their acquired knowledge and skill. Performance assessments are used primarily to determine what students can and cannot *do*, in contrast to what they do or do not *know*. A performance assessment may include a written component, but often focuses primarily on the student's demonstration of a specified task. Performance assessments are typically scored using rubrics, which explicitly describe levels of performance and designate which levels meet standards.

An authentic assessment is one in which students perform a real-world task. The more authentic the assessment is, the more closely it approximates the way a similar task would be done in a setting outside the classroom (a workplace or community, for example). Authentic assessments are by definition performance-oriented, but some performance assessments are more or less authentic than others.

**5. Must the same assessment be used across a division or may decisions about assessments be made at the school level?**

We recommend that this decision be made at the local level. Many divisions engage teachers in collaborative development of common assessments, and we recommend this practice. However, we know that this development takes time and rarely occurs on the same schedule across all content areas and grade levels. Resources vary from division to division, and flexibility will allow each division to make this individual decision. We discourage the Board from requiring division-wide assessments, at least in the short term, as we believe this hinders this powerful collaborative process.

**6. Must local assessments provide a summative measure of student achievement or will interim assessments administered throughout the year be sufficient?**

Assessments administered throughout the year allow for (1) more timely information about student learning that informs instruction, (2) a balanced system that includes multiple assessment types, (3) repeated assessments of important skills that build over time, and (4) better integration of assessment and instruction. We strongly recommend that assessment not be limited to a single end-of-year measure.

**7. Will the guidelines allow for group work? If so, will there be guidance as to how the contribution of individual students will be captured?**

The decision about whether and how to incorporate group work is best left to the locality. Some types of assessment lend themselves well to a combination of group and individual work. If students worked together on a multiple choice test and turned in one paper, those responses would not be valid indicators of the performance of individual group members. On the other hand, students might work together to research a topic, share resources and findings with each other, discuss and debate the topic, and then compose individual responses to an open-ended question. We believe teachers are capable of skillfully implementing a range of models while capturing data that represents each student's performance.

**8. If performance tasks are used, – will students be permitted to attempt the same task again if they are unsuccessful on the first attempt?**

This is a decision best made locally based on the design of each assessment. A student who completes a project over a period of multiple weeks might submit parts of that project along the way (a hypothesis or a data collection plan in science, for example) to the teacher for feedback. The project gets stronger as the student learns from this feedback. Then, the assessment score is based on the final project. One could say that the student has had multiple attempts, but the ability for students to improve their performance before the final demonstration is a strength of this type of assessment. To illustrate, imagine a musician taking lessons prior to a concert or an athlete receiving coaching to prepare for a competition. This is how they learn and improve, but the instruction does not detract from the importance of or the ability to assess the final performance.

**- will it be permissible to use the same tasks from year to year or will it be necessary to develop new tasks?**

Performance tasks are generally open-ended, requiring students to generate their own designs and ideas. In fact, many of the SOL that lend themselves best to performance assessment indicate that producing a unique answer is necessary to succeed on the task. An illustration of this is the definition of "understanding" in the Science SOL, which includes the ability to "*explain the information in one's own words, comprehend how the information is related to other key facts, and suggest additional interpretations of its meaning or importance.*" When students are engaged in these higher-level activities, requiring not only replication but processing and use of ideas, then each person's response or product may (and should) be different. This allows performance tasks to be used repeatedly.

**9. If integrated assessments are used, will the requirements be different?**

We hope that many school divisions will take advantage of the opportunity to develop and use integrated

assessments. We recommend that requirements be consistent whether assessments are integrated or not.

**10. What professional development must be provided to teachers?**

The professional development needs of teachers vary due to several factors, including:

- their existing knowledge and practice.
- the degree to which the school division's assessment practices have given them related experience.
- the level of interest on the part of the teacher or the division in using alternate forms of assessment.
- whether they will be implementing alternate forms of assessment designed by others or be designing assessments and rubrics.

All of these factors must be taken into account by local school divisions when professional development programs are designed. Funding is and will continue to be, a key issue in assuring delivery of appropriate and adequate professional development for teachers and administrators. A great deal of expertise in this area exists in Virginia's education community. We recommend that the Department of Education seek ways to support quality professional development options, including by partnering with school divisions, associations and teacher education programs.

Just as we are advocating for practices that move Virginia forward in the area of assessment, we encourage policymakers to consider the qualities of effective professional development in designing professional development or selecting programs to support. Members of the Roundtable are familiar with the research in this area and available as resources to support this work.

**11. What support will be provided to small school divisions?**

Small school divisions will need opportunities to collaborate with other divisions, associations, and teacher educators in order to increase capacity and efficiency. Care should be taken to ensure that within and among these networks, current technology is leveraged, professional development is offered, calibration sessions are available, and model assessments are shared. We encourage the Board to seek financial support to encourage such partnerships and networks.

**12. How will "adequate academic progress" be defined?**

Data provided by classroom teachers in the form of assessment scores and student grades will indicate the level at which each student has achieved proficiency of the SOL content and skills.

**14. IDEA requires that alternate assessments be provided for students who are unable to participate in the regular district assessment. How will school divisions ensure that this requirement is addressed?**

When students are unable to participate in regular assessment, their IEPs or 504 Plans indicate the accommodations to be provided, both on classroom and large-scale assessments. We do not see any need for this to change.

Conclusion

The members of the Assessment and Accountability Roundtable appreciate your consideration of our positions, and we hope to be engaged further in the important work being undertaken by the Board. We are encouraged by and eager to participate in policy discussions related to modernizing Virginia's assessment and accountability systems. Reductions in high-stakes testing open opportunities for classroom practices that increase student engagement, emphasize higher-level thinking, and allow for more direct links between classroom lessons and real-world experiences.

It is essential that the Board of Education stay true to the intent of HB930/SB306 in crafting its guidelines, remembering the stated intent of the legislation:

- reduction in the number of tests;
- devotion of more time to instruction;
- assessment of higher order thinking skills; and
- greater local flexibility in regard to timing and content.

While we are eager to see student assessment in Virginia become more performance-based and authentic in nature, we see neither legislative language nor any other reason for the Board to rush to establish guidelines that restrict the range of options available to school divisions. In an environment where policymakers, educators and parents are all concerned about too much testing, we hope the Board will resist adding requirements to replace those that were so recently removed. An approach that is more prescriptive than necessary is likely to cause confusion, hurried implementation of models without ample time to prepare, and results that can't be trusted. In order to maintain consistency across school divisions, the Board should require certification that SOL content and skills are being taught and student achievement and progress are being assessed. We believe this approach is sufficient and allows school divisions the space to encourage and support innovation and creativity. In all its actions, we encourage the Board to return as much autonomy as possible for assessment of student learning to the division, building, and classroom levels, where educators are uniquely qualified to engage in this work.

Our desire to leave decisions about assessment in non-SOL areas largely to localities does not indicate any lack of interest in assuring assessment quality. On the contrary, many of our members are currently engaged in activities that support design and implementation of evidence-based alternate assessments. We would welcome the opportunity to share these efforts with the Board and the Department of Education as appropriate.

Mrs. Sarah Gross, legislative chair for the Virginia PTA, presented on behalf of the Assessment and Accountability Roundtable. Dr. Tom Smith, representing the Virginia Association of School Superintendents was available to answer Board members' questions.

The Board discussion included:

- Mrs. Atkinson said she does not want the Board guidelines to be overly restrictive, but to balance the great responsibility of what goes on in classrooms in the Commonwealth. Mrs. Atkinson said she has concerns of what might fill the gap left by the elimination of some assessments.
- Mrs. Atkinson asked for clarification about if the local assessments must include all SOL for that subject. Mrs. Atkinson asked if it was their desire to suggest that the Board require that there be multiple classroom assessments. The response was that the decision should be made by teachers in each school division.
- Dr. Cannaday said he hopes assessment factors will inform teaching and will result in improved learning.
- Dr. Baysal said the guidelines should be at a minimum and limited to the language of House Bill 930 and SB 306.
- Mr. Braunlich said he was confused and conflicted with the following items in the document: attention must be given to quality and alignment, school divisions can certify that local assessment measure the SOL, the Board is discouraged from the divisionwide assessments, and the data will be provided by classroom teachers in the form of assessment scores and student grades. Dr. Tom Smith responded.
- Mr. Braunlich said no funds were provided for professional development at the local level and Dr. Smith agreed.
- Mr. Ko said parents should get involved and have access to information on assessments.

- Mrs. Sears asked if there are any fears about new assessments from parents, teachers, and superintendents.
- Mrs. Sears said since she has been on the Board some schools have certified that they have met standards that they did not meet.
- Mr. Dillard said he is concerned about student fears in not passing SOL tests.
- Dr. Cannaday said the time frame should allow time to develop assessments, peer review, professional development, and review and evaluate steps to see if it is working.
- Mrs. Atkinson agreed with Dr. Cannaday that it will take time to put the new guidelines in place.
- Mr. Braunlich said he was working with Meg Gruber to set dates to visit school divisions in August and September to discuss the new guidelines with teachers.

The Board accepted the report from the Assessment and Accountability Roundtable.

### ***DISCUSSION OF CURRENT ISSUES***

The Board met for a public dinner on Wednesday, June 25, 2014, at the Commonwealth Park Suites Hotel with the following members present: Mrs. Atkinson, Dr. Baysal, Mr. Braunlich, Dr. Cannaday, Mr. Dillard, Mrs. Edwards, Mr. Ko, Mrs. Sears, and Mrs. Wodiska. Dr. Steven Staples, Superintendent of Public Instruction, also attended the meeting. Members discussed pending Board agenda items. No votes were taken, and the dinner meeting ended at 8:00 p.m.

### ***EXECUTIVE SESSION***

Mrs. Sears made a motion to go into executive session under *Virginia Code* § 2.2-3711(A)(41), for the purpose of discussion and consideration of records relating to denial, suspension, or revocation of teacher licenses, and, under *Virginia Code* § 2.2-3711(A)(7), to consult with counsel and receive legal advice regarding the same, and that Wendell Roberts, legal counsel to the Virginia Board of Education, as well as staff members, Dr. Steven Staples, Patty Pitts, Nancy Walsh, and Richard Schley, participate in this closed meeting. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Edwards and carried unanimously. The Board went into Executive Session at 1:20 p.m.

Mrs. Sears made a motion that the Board reconvene in open session. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Atkinson and carried unanimously. The Board reconvened at 1:28 p.m.

Mrs. Sears made a motion that the Board certify by roll-call vote that to the best of each member's knowledge, (1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements of the Freedom of Information Act were discussed and (2) only matters identified in the motion to have the closed session were discussed. The motion was seconded by Dr. Cannaday and carried unanimously.

Board Roll call:

Mr. Dillard – Yes  
Dr. Baysal – Yes  
Mrs. Edwards – Yes  
Mrs. Sears – Yes  
Mr. Braunlich – Yes  
Dr. Cannaday – Yes  
Mrs. Atkinson – Yes  
Mrs. Wodiska – Yes  
Mr. Ko – Yes

The Board made the following motions:

- Mr. Braunlich made a motion to revoke the license of Mary Blankenship Niles. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dillard and carried unanimously.

***ADJOURNMENT OF THE BUSINESS SESSION***

There being no further business of the Board of Education and Board of Career and Technical Education, Mr. Braunlich adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m.

---

President